

Dear Ms. Pinkerton,

As to your question why there is ignorance with aversion, is it because one does not conquer aversion or does not see its consequences?

I would answer: understanding, paññā, can see what is wholesome and what is not wholesome and it knows the benefit of kusala and the disadvantages of akusala. Ignorance cannot see this. It does not know that there is akusala at the moment of aversion, it does not know the disadvantage of it, it does not know anything about realities, it is compared to darkness in the teachings. Ignorance is the root of all that is unprofitable. When there is lobha, or dosa, or stinginess there is also ignorance at the same time. Ignorance can only be eradicated by the kind of paññā which sees realities as they are. It cannot be eradicated by theoretical understanding of the truth, only by direct understanding of realities which can develop so that once lokuttara paññā (supramundane paññā) can arise which eradicates defilements.

You have aversion about what happens in the world, about what other people are doing or not doing. Can one control others? If we come to understand more about cittas which arise because of conditions we will become more tolerant as to other people's behaviour. We all have different accumulations, we had different experiences in the past. Each citta which arises falls away immediately, but since it conditions the next citta inclinations can be accumulated from one citta to the next citta. We all have accumulated a lot of lobha, dosa and moha. There may not be opportunities for lobha which is as strong that it motivates very bad deeds at this moment, but who knows the future or the next life? When there are the right conditions for it we may do deeds which may surprise us. The potentialities are there, since akusala has not been eradicated. Through the Dhamma one also gets to know more deeply one's accumulated inclinations. When one sees others behaving badly, one may understand: 'I have not eradicated defilements, when the object is just right I too may behave badly'. Through the Dhamma one becomes more sincere, less self-complacent.

When there is more mindfulness of nama and rupa one realizes that in the ultimate sense there are no people, only nama and rupa which arise because they are conditioned already. If one can help others one will, but if one cannot, one realizes that it is better to be mindful than having aversion. With ^{aversion} ~~aversion~~ one cannot do any good. And even aversion has a characteristic, it is not 'my aversion', only

a reality which has arisen already because of its own conditions. Do we know its characteristic? We only seem to know ~~the~~ aversion by name, thus a concept of aversion. It is surprising how little we know realities when they appear. But it is useful to realize how little we know. When there is aversion there are namas and rupas which may appear one at a time. When there is mindfulness of one reality at a time it can be known as it is, without there being the need to name it.

When there is compassion there cannot be aversion at the same time, aversion is akusala whereas compassion can arise only with kusala citta. When we want to help someone who is in need there can be compassion. There can be moments of aversion shortly after the moments with compassion, but the aversion and compassion have different characteristics. Don't we often take aversion for compassion? Compassion can never arise with unpleasant feeling. It arises with pleasant feeling or with indifferent feeling.

You wonder how to overcome aversion. It is not possible to overcome it until one has reached the third stage of enlightenment, the stage of the 'non-returner'. It is only right understanding of realities which has been developed to that stage which can eradicate aversion. It can never be eradicated when one still takes realities for self.

You read that one must cultivate a state of complete detachment. This is only the result of pañña which has reached maturity, at the stage of arahatship. All that has to be done now is being mindful of whatever reality arises. We have to know our akusala very well, otherwise we will continue taking it for self. If we try not to have it there is a concept of self who tries and wants to be so good.

You consider akusala citta as another mind, an opposing mind. There are different types of citta arising at different moments. When there are conditions for akusala citta it arises, and then the present moment is akusala citta. But it falls away again and then other types of citta arise, one at a time. Opposing mind is misleading, it seems that 'I am really kusala, but there is an opposing mind.'

As to your remark: 'When I try to practise sati, I think: 'well most of my thought comes through the mind-door', I would answer:

If one tries to practise sati there is again a concept of self who tries. Sati can arise only with a kusala citta and we cannot expect it to arise at will. There cannot be long moments of sati either. I am sending you part of my draft about paññā cetasika and in this

draft I explain more about mindfulness/ and the right conditions for it. N_o body can make sati arise at will. Sati is not thinking either. It is non-forgetfulness of the characteristic of a reality which appears now. There may be thinking and this is different from seeing or hearing. Its characteristic can be experienced and then ~~gr~~ gradually it can be known as only a conditioned reality, an experience and that is all. No need to think about the minddoor. When there is thinking about an animal there is a reality which experiences a concept through the mind-door, but no need to think about thinking. Its characteristic can be directly known when there is thinking. If one thinks about thinking one only thinks about a concept and one does not/ get to know the characteristic of thinking.

With mettā,

Nina van Gorkom.